

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method, comprising:
 - 5 detecting a computer system activity level indicative of computer system activity;
 - determining whether said activity level exceeds an activity threshold in response to said detecting; and
 - 10 transitioning a presence state of an instant messenger to a busy state in response to determining that said activity level exceeds said activity threshold, wherein said presence state corresponds to a given user.
- 15 2. The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising:
 - determining whether said activity level does not exceed said activity threshold subsequent to transitioning said presence state to said busy state; and
 - 20 transitioning said presence state of said instant messenger to an online state in response to determining that said level of computer system activity does not exceed said activity threshold.
- 25 3. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein said computer system activity comprises keyboard activity.
4. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein said computer system activity comprises mouse activity.
- 30 5. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein said computer system activity comprises one or more simultaneous instant messenger sessions.

6. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein said computer system activity comprises processor utilization.

5 7. The method as recited in claim 6, wherein said processor utilization further comprises a foreground processor utilization corresponding to activity of foreground computer system processes and a background processor utilization corresponding to activity of background computer system processes, and wherein said activity threshold further comprises a foreground process threshold corresponding to said
10 foreground processor utilization.

8. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein said computer system activity is configurable by a user from a plurality of types of computer system activity.

15 9. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein said activity threshold is configurable by a user.

10. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein said activity threshold further comprises a threshold time, and wherein determining whether said level of computer
20 system activity exceeds an activity threshold further comprises determining whether the duration of said level of computer system activity exceeds said threshold time.

11. The method as recited in claim 10, wherein said threshold time is configurable by a user.

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12. The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising:

storing schedule information corresponding to a given user, wherein said schedule information is indicative of an activity status of said given user at a given
30 time;

querying said schedule information; and

5 if a current presence state of said instant messenger does not correspond to said activity status indicated by said schedule information, assigning a different presence state that corresponds to said activity status in response to said querying, wherein said current presence state and said different presence state each correspond to said given user.

10 13. The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising:

receiving an instant messaging operation directed to a given user, wherein said given user is not offline;

15 determining said presence state of said instant messenger in response to receiving said instant messaging operation; and

selectively processing said instant messaging operation dependent upon said presence state in response to said determining.

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14. The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising:

25 storing an instant messaging operation associated with a given presence state of said instant messenger, wherein said given presence state corresponds to a given user;

detecting a transition to said given presence state subsequent to said storing; and

performing said instant messaging operation in response to said detecting.

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15. A computer-accessible medium comprising program instructions, wherein the program instructions are computer-executable to:

detect a computer system activity level indicative of computer system activity;

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determine whether said activity level exceeds an activity threshold in response to said detection; and

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transition a presence state of an instant messenger to a busy state in response to said determination that said activity level exceeds said activity threshold, wherein said presence state corresponds to a given user.

16. The computer-accessible medium as recited in claim 15, wherein said program instructions are further computer-executable to:

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determine whether said activity level does not exceed said activity threshold subsequent to transitioning said presence state to said busy state; and

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transition said presence state of said instant messenger to an online state in response to determining that said level of computer system activity does not exceed said activity threshold.

17. The computer-accessible medium as recited in claim 15, wherein said computer system activity comprises keyboard activity.

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18. The computer-accessible medium as recited in claim 15, wherein said computer system activity comprises mouse activity.

19. The computer-accessible medium as recited in claim 15, wherein said computer system activity comprises one or more simultaneous instant messenger sessions.

5 20. The computer-accessible medium as recited in claim 15, wherein said computer system activity comprises processor utilization.

21. The computer-accessible medium as recited in claim 20, wherein said processor utilization further comprises a foreground processor utilization corresponding
10 to activity of foreground computer system processes and a background processor utilization corresponding to activity of background computer system processes, and wherein said activity threshold further comprises a foreground process threshold corresponding to said foreground processor utilization.

15 22. The computer-accessible medium as recited in claim 15, wherein said computer system activity is configurable by a user from a plurality of types of computer system activity.

23. The computer-accessible medium as recited in claim 15, wherein said
20 activity threshold is configurable by a user.

24. The computer-accessible medium as recited in claim 15, wherein said activity threshold further comprises a threshold time, and wherein determining whether said level of computer system activity exceeds an activity threshold further comprises
25 determining whether the duration of said level of computer system activity exceeds said threshold time.

25. The computer-accessible medium as recited in claim 24, wherein said threshold time is configurable by a user.

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26. The computer-accessible medium as recited in claim 15, wherein said program instructions are further computer-executable to:

5 store schedule information corresponding to a given user, wherein said schedule information is indicative of an activity status of said given user at a given time;

query said schedule information; and

10 if a current presence state of said instant messenger does not correspond to said activity status indicated by said schedule information, assign a different presence state that corresponds to said activity status in response to said querying, wherein said current presence state and said different presence state each correspond to said given user.

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27. The computer-accessible medium as recited in claim 15, wherein said program instructions are further computer-executable to:

20 receive an instant messaging operation directed to a given user, wherein said given user is not offline;

determine said presence state of said instant messenger in response to receiving said instant messaging operation; and

25 selectively process said instant messaging operation dependent upon said presence state in response to said determining.

28. The computer-accessible medium as recited in claim 15, wherein said program instructions are further computer-executable to:

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store an instant messaging operation associated with a given presence state of said instant messenger, wherein said given presence state corresponds to a given user;

5 detect a transition to said given presence state subsequent to said storing; and
perform said instant messaging operation in response to said detecting.

29. A system, comprising:

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a computer system; and

an instant messenger software module configured to execute on said computer system;

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wherein said instant messenger software module is further configured to:

detect a computer system activity level indicative of computer system activity;

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determine whether said activity level exceeds an activity threshold in response to said detection; and

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transition a presence state of said instant messenger software module to a busy state in response to said determination that said activity level exceeds said activity threshold, wherein said presence state corresponds to a given user.

30. The system as recited in claim 29, wherein said instant messenger software
30 module is further configured to:

determine whether said activity level does not exceed said activity threshold subsequent to transitioning said presence state to said busy state; and

5 transition said presence state of said instant messenger software module to an online state in response to determining that said level of computer system activity does not exceed said activity threshold.

31. The system as recited in claim 29, wherein said computer system activity
10 comprises keyboard activity.

32. The system as recited in claim 29, wherein said computer system activity comprises mouse activity.

15 33. The system as recited in claim 29, wherein said computer system activity comprises one or more simultaneous instant messenger sessions.

34. The system as recited in claim 29, wherein said computer system activity comprises processor utilization.

20 35. The system as recited in claim 34, wherein said processor utilization further comprises a foreground processor utilization corresponding to activity of foreground computer system processes and a background processor utilization corresponding to activity of background computer system processes, and wherein said
25 activity threshold further comprises a foreground process threshold corresponding to said foreground processor utilization.

36. The system as recited in claim 29, wherein said computer system activity is configurable by a user from a plurality of types of computer system activity.

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37. The system as recited in claim 29, wherein said activity threshold is configurable by a user.

5 38. The system as recited in claim 29, wherein said activity threshold further comprises a threshold time, and wherein determining whether said level of computer system activity exceeds an activity threshold further comprises determining whether the duration of said level of computer system activity exceeds said threshold time.

10 39. The system as recited in claim 38, wherein said threshold time is configurable by a user.

40. The system as recited in claim 29, wherein said instant messenger software module is further configured to:

15 store schedule information corresponding to a given user, wherein said schedule information is indicative of an activity status of said given user at a given time;

query said schedule information; and

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if a current presence state of said instant messenger software module does not correspond to said activity status indicated by said schedule information, assign a different presence state that corresponds to said activity status in response to said querying, wherein said current presence state and said different presence state each correspond to said given user.

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41. The system as recited in claim 29, wherein said instant messenger software module is further configured to:

receive an instant messaging operation directed to a given user, wherein said given user is not offline;

5 determine said presence state of said instant messenger software module in response to receiving said instant messaging operation; and

selectively process said instant messaging operation dependent upon said presence state in response to said determining.

10 42. The system as recited in claim 29, wherein said instant messenger software module is further configured to:

15 store an instant messaging operation associated with a given presence state of said instant messenger software module, wherein said given presence state corresponds to a given user;

detect a transition to said given presence state subsequent to said storing; and

20 perform said instant messaging operation in response to said detecting.